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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, December 21, 1942

SUBJECT: "WARTIME RESTRICTIONS AND CHRISTMAS." Information from information officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of Price Administration.

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3Hh The war has affected Christmas in many different ways this year. But with all the many necessary wartime restrictions on foods, goods and services, the Christmas traditions can carry on with surprisingly little change.

To be sure, this is the first Christmas in American history when any food has been rationed. With coffee and sugar coming in by coupon only most families won't be urging their Christmas Day guests to have another cup of coffee, and the Christmas dinner probably won't feature as many sweets as last year--cakes, puddings, sauces, confections and all the rest. The children won't be making so much candy at home either. The fruit cake or plum pudding at this year's dinner will very likely be made partly with sirup or honey. Many of the Christmas candies will also contain more sirup than sugar. For during the past year American housewives as well as commercial candy-makers have learned a lot about stretching sugar. By using corn sugar and glucose the industry has been making a pound of sugar stretch to more than a pound and a half, thus adding more than a quarter of a million tons to the country's sugar supply.

The Government's War Production Board recently stated that the candy industry in this country is doing an excellent job of meeting both military and civilian demands in spite of smaller supplies of chocolate and sugar. They have done it by a careful plan of simplification and substitution. In wartime people eat all the candy they can get. So demand for candy has gone up steady since 1939. Right now candy-makers are not turning out quite as much candy as civilians would be willing to buy, but they are turning out almost as much candy as in 1941, before the present shortages of chocolate and sugar.

Much of the candy being manufactured now is going to the armed forces. When soldiers go to war they need candy. The soldier's "extreme emergency" food package, known in the Army as Ration D, contains hard chocolate and sugar--lots of body fuel and little bulk. The candy industry is also turning out the concentrated Ration K for the armed forces--including dextrose tablets, chocolate and chewing gum, in case drinking water is short. Ration K is for paratroops and other fighting men far from field kitchen. These candy products Ration K and Ration D are at war in the air, in the dessert, in the jungle and under the sea. Twelve hundred plants and 70 thousand workers are necessary to turn out the candy needs of civilian and soldier.

Along with supplying candy to the men in uniform the candy industry is trying to meet a civilian demand for candy that averages about 16 pounds per person a year. Normally, the industry uses 232 million pounds of chocolate a year. But the War Production Board has cut down on chocolate for candy this year, because ships from Africa and South America must carry war goods rather than cocoa beans.

Since the 15 of this month, chocolate for novelties has been out by Government order. No more chocolate Santa Clauses, chocolate Easter eggs, chocolate valentine hearts and other chocolate items more for decoration than food. Chocolate is the greatest single shortage in the candy industry at present. It is even more of a shortage than sugar because candy-manufacturers have become so skillful at stretching sugar that their production does not suffer seriously from sugar rationing.

By the way, because chocolate and cocoa have such high nutritional value and are so valuable to our armies and allies, the Agricultural Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture purchased 382 thousand pounds of chocolate and more than a million pounds of cocoa between March 15, 1941 and October 31, 1943. And this month there was a super-duper purchase of chocolate

bars--more than 13 tons of them.

Well, so much for the war's effect on candy. Now about some of the other items that spell Christmas to most Americans--Christmas trees--Christmas toys and games--Christmas ice cream.

Christmas trees got no restricting orders this year. But the Government did request that Christmas tree producers and distributors use no unnecessary rubber and gasoline in trucking trees to market and no men needed for vital war work. The Government also asked that they cut trees so as to save and improve the forests, not wastefully.

Christmas toys and games got their orders in November. No more toys and games of certain metals and other critical materials, except the small amount of iron and steel hardware necessary for putting them together. So wise mothers this Christmas will teach their children to take care of the toys they have since they won't be able to replace many of them. Children need to understand that many toys will be scarce from now on. Broken toys may stay broken until the war is over, for the Government order restricted metal and other critical materials for repairing as well as manufacturing toys.

Christmas ice cream? The Government has recently cut down its manufacture 20 percent to save butterfat for butter. This order is for the months of December and January because right now the Country is having its most critical butter shortage in years.

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